

**From:** MrActorGuy@aol.com@inetgw  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/26/02 4:07am  
**Subject:** Microsoft settlement (against)

Hello:

I am against the Justice Department's proposed Microsoft settlement as it now stands because I believe it does nothing to restore competition in the software industry.

First, Microsoft was found to use its monopoly power to stop competition in areas that it felt threatened its Window's monopoly. These two areas specifically were the internet browser market and where the Java programming language was concerned. This was because both technologies threatened to undermine the Window's Operating System, the source of Microsoft's power. I am against the proposal because it does nothing to restore competition to the internet browser market, and it does nothing to prevent Microsoft from not supporting Java. I will further explain these two assertions.

First, Microsoft already owns the internet browser market due to its anticompetitive efforts. Even if the proposed settlement was to take effect, Microsoft would be under no threat from competition in this market because it has already tied its Internet Explorer browser to Windows. In fact users of Windows have to go out of their way to use alternative products such as Netscape's Navigator Browser and from my experience many people do not even know that alternative products exist (in some cases better products). The proposed settlement does not rectify this situation, as it merely is an effort to stop Microsoft from using its power in this manner again in the future. This really is little concern for Microsoft because it does not need to do this again as it has already killed the competition in this area, and the lack of competition threatens to destroy competition in even other areas, as I will explain further later.

I want to first say that any effort to undue the wrong done by Microsoft must force it to untie its browser from Windows so that other browsers have a chance to compete with Microsoft's browser. Furthermore, Microsoft's browser must be forced to conform to open internet standards and not be allowed to use its monopoly power to exclude alternate technologies, as it is doing now. For example, many websites now will only work correctly with Microsoft's Internet Explorer. Furthermore, some of these sites will only work correctly if you are using the version of Internet Explorer for Windows, which encourages people to use Windows out of necessity not choice. To illustrate this point I can be using the same version of Internet Explorer on a competing platform, such as a Macintosh computer, as on a Windows machine and some websites will not work properly because Microsoft has made both browsers work differently to the benefit of the Windows version. If a person needs to access some of these internet sites, or encounters this type of problem enough, that person might buy a Windows based computer the next time

around just because Microsoft has made it impossible for that person to use another platform. With Netscape's browser I never had this problem. Internet sites viewed on any platform worked the same when using Netscape Navigator. Netscape made the Internet open, Microsoft attempts to make the internet only open to users of its products, which kills competition.

Another thing the settlement should force Microsoft to do is include Java support in any version of Windows that it ships. Windows XP does not do this even though other versions of Windows did. This is a devastating blow to competition. By doing so Microsoft is making it harder for developers to write software for multiple platforms because developers have to write software individually for multiple platforms without Java, whereas with Java they can write software once and it will work on various platforms. As a Macintosh user I can attest to the fact that developers will often neglect the Mac platform because they will have to spend a majority of their time writing software for Windows, which is a larger market. This kills competition in the operating system market because people will often not buy a Mac because of a lack of software. If a developer can use Java, this problem is greatly alleviated, and Microsoft accordingly should be forced to support it. The current settlement does not do this.

Additionally Microsoft has often held an axe of sorts over the closest consumer based competitor in the operating system market. I am referring to Apple. Apple needs Microsoft Office to survive as most people who want to use Macs still want to communicate with people using Windows. Microsoft in the past has threatened to stop making Office for the Mac if Apple did not bend to its wishes, even though making Office is profitable for Microsoft. Some of these demands have been for Apple to replace Netscape Navigator for Internet Explorer as the default browser on Macintoshes (this damaged Mac users as Netscape was equal on multiple platforms), for Apple to share some of its proprietary technology with Microsoft so it could make Windows better (taking away Apple's Operating System's superiority), and trying to get Apple to stop making Quicktime, its competing software, for Windows. A deal that guaranteed that Microsoft would produce Office for the Mac is about to expire. Microsoft should not be able to hold the Office knife to Apple's throat any longer. As long as Office is profitable on the Mac platform, Microsoft should be forced to make a version of it for the Mac that is compatible with the Windows version. Even if it is not profitable Microsoft should still be required to make the software for a while, as Microsoft's anticompetitive efforts have hurt Apple's market share, and Apple should be given a chance to recover some of this. Microsoft Office started on the Mac, it should be kept there. Doing so allows Apple to compete with Microsoft without the fear of retribution. If this issue is not addressed, Microsoft will continue to control Apple, which might result in Apple unfairly going out of business. If this happened people like me, who prefer alternate technologies to Microsoft's offerings, will eventually be forced to use only Microsoft products. This not only is anticompetitive, but anti-American, as

America is about the freedom to choose. Microsoft exerted a great effort to prevent people from doing this, a stricter settlement is in order reverse the damage that Microsoft has done.

Sincerely,

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